

Lesser Black-backed Gull
21 Dec 1993
Des Moines, Polk Co., IA
*Cecil
IBL 64:48, 68

Record Number: 93-33
Classification: A-D

DOCUMENTATION

Robert Cecil, 1315 41st St., Des Moines 50311

REFERENCES

Field Reports: IBL 64:48

Records Committee: IBL 64:68

VOTE: 7 A-D

A-D, Excellent description by one of Iowa's top birders. [Bob, you forgot the "!" /THK]

A-D, Basic plumage adult.

DOCUMENTATION FORM
For Extraordinary Bird Sightings in Iowa

93-33

What species? Lesser Black Backed Gull How many? 1

Location? Des Moines River, Downtown Des Moines, Polk County, Iowa

Type of Habitat? River

When? date(s): Dec. 21, 1993 time: 4:00 PM to 4:15 PM

Who? your name and address: Robert Cecil 1315 41st St. Des Moines, IA 50311

Others with you: No

Others before or after you: Not to my knowledge

Describe the bird(s) including only what you observed. Include size, shape, details of all parts (bill, eye, head, neck, back, wing, tail, throat, breast, belly, undertail, legs, feet). Also mention voice and behavior.

I was looking at a group of about 100 Herring and Ring-billed Gulls when I observed a gull with a dark gray mantle. As it was standing amid both Ring-bills and adult and 1st winter Herring gulls, I could see that it was approximately intermediate in size between those two species. It had dirty yellow legs, pale eye, and yellow bill with red gonys spot. Its head was heavily streaked with brown over white. Except for the dark gray mantle, the bird was all white, including tail, underparts, etc.

The mantle color was dark gray - not black. The primaries were black in contrast to the gray mantle. At rest, the gray of the mantle was separated from the black of the primaries by the white of the secondary's trailing edge.

I waved my arms to get the birds to fly. This worked very well. The bird vanished over the dam before I could get my scope on it, and I could not find it again.

Similar species; how eliminated: Most other dark mantled gulls have pink legs. Yellow-footed gull is larger in size than Herring.

Did any one disagree or have reservations about the identification? Not me.
If yes, explain:

Viewing conditions: give lighting, distance (how measured), optical equipment. Appx. 100 ft. Sky cloudy, but otherwise good viewing conditions. I used a 20x Nikon Scope and 10x Zeiss Binocs.

Previous experience with species and similar ones: This is the third Lesser Black-backed I have found in Iowa.

References and persons consulted before writing description: Nope

How long before field notes made? at the time this form completed? 4 days

Send completed form to Field Reports or CBC editor (address on back cover of Iowa Bird Life).